**Antisemitism in Australia**

Hate crimes against Jewish people in Australia has increased by 35% since last year (ecaj). Good morning, my name is James and I am here to talk about the fastest growing form of racism in Australia. Antisemitism is the hostility to or prejudice against Jewish people (OxfordLanguages). The history of antisemitism dates back to ancient time from third century BC in Egypt by the Egyptians to first century AD in Judea by the Romans. It has also continued into the modern age with the most infamous example being the tragedy of the Holocaust in committed by Adolf Hitler in Poland. Much of contemporary antisemitism can be split into two categories, conspiracists who believe that the Jewish people secretly control the world and Islamic extremists who show distain towards Jewish people on the basis of their religious beliefs. This speech will primarily focus on the former however this not to say that the latter is any less evil. These conspiracists generally believe the myth of a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions. Jewish people make up almost one percent of the total Australian population with approximately 200,000 people and is the sixth most practised religion in Australia. Any discrimination against a group of people based on their immutable characteristics is clearly unjust, especially that of such a significant minority group in Australia’s multicultural society, the Jewish.

The effects of antisemitism on everyday Jews are significant even in the multicultural Australian society. According the executive Council of Australian Jewry, since 2020 acts of antisemitism have increased by 42%. This massive increase has caused the state governments such as Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria to ban the public display of various Nazi symbolism. Extreme antisemitism primarily comes religious and political extremists it is mostly condemned by the majority of Australian society. Even so antisemitism still appears in the media and more mainstream politics in a usually more mild and degrading form. This usually ranges from insensitive and incorrect holocaust analogies to misrepresentations of the ongoing Israel Gaza conflict. Examples of the former include Australian senator George Christensen on a podcast hosted by far-right extremist Alex Jones. During which Christensen laughs at Jones’ comparison of Australian COVID-19 quarantine facilities with Auschwitz because they both had "big fences". This trivialisation and minimisation of this targeted genocide of the Jewish people desensitises people to the evils of Nazism and antisemitism as a whole. Modern explicit examples of antisemitism in mainstream media are quite rare however the following article by Australian online news outlet redflag written in 2019 is a good example in more fringe media outlets. This piece covers the controversial Palestinian speaker Remi Kanazi and the “Smear campaign trying to block (his) visa” as the title of this article suggests. This article refers to “The Jewish Lobby in Australia” as the leader of this campaign. This phrasing is incredible misleading and borderline false. In fact, it was only one Jewish organisation, the Anti-Defamation Commission, which objected to the speaker’s visit (refrence). The so-called “lobbying campaign” consisted of a single letter sent by the ADC to David Coleman, the immigration minister. Characterising the work of a single organisation as the action of “The Jewish Lobby” is quite antisemitic on its face and propagates lies about the Jewish people more generally. In the end, Remi’s visa was accepted and nothing more came of this situation. Standing up to misinformation is the best way remove its potency in society, if people know something is false and create awareness

Since neo-Nazis are self-proclaimed followers of the most prolific antisemite in modern history it would follow that they too would have a firm hatred for the Jews. Justification of this abhorrent belief includes the false assertion that Jewish secretly people control the world from the shadows. These beliefs do not cause violence on their own however create a strong motive to commit a hate crime. This clearly endangers anyone who happens to be of the Jewish race or practices its associated religion and is why the spread of these lies is so detrimental. Another aspect to the neo-Nazi’s beliefs is that of Holocaust denial. They suggest that they whole event was hoax using bogus statistics and denying blatant facts. The first and most prolific piece of “evidence” is the idea that it was impossible for so many people to be have killed by the Nazi. This comes from a report written by American execution equipment manufacturer and neo-Nazi Fred Leuchter. In this report he makes outrageous assertions such as the gas chambers would have needed to have been aired for a week before it could be used again, each person would take up one square meter in the chamber and other completely disproven assertions. Since this bogus report is the main reason people believe that this tragedy never even happened, it creates people who believe that the Jewish people are lying to them in some kind of attempt to gather sympathy from society. This is yet another motive for people to perpetrate crimes against the Jewish population including in Australia.

Yet another cause of antisemitism in the modern age is the internet. The capacity for internet to radicalise people into holding extreme beliefs is well documented. The reason for this is quite obvious, on the internet you can surround yourself people of any belief. As seen in history in things such as slavery and discrimination more generally, people are surrounded by people who believe this these actions are okay, their morals can be skewed into something widely socially unacceptable. The same thing happens on the internet. They become socially manipulated into believing things they would never think was true even a month ago….

References:

<https://www.ecaj.org.au/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/ECAJ-Antisemitism-Report-2022.pdf>

https://redflag.org.au/node/6739

Planning:

Contention

The increase of antisemitic acts committed by neo-Nazis in Australia poses a significant threat to the Australian Jewish minority

Argument 1:

The Everyday Effects of antisemitism on Australian Jews

Argument 2:

The attitudes and beliefs of neo-Nazis in Australia

Argument 3:

How internet echo chambers have affected the prevalence of antisemitism